



The Insider

www.senate.mi.gov/switalski

Inside State Politics with State Senator Mickey Switalski Senate District 10

December 22, 2005

Welcome to the electronic version of *The Insider*. I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your support and for giving me an opportunity to represent you in the Michigan Senate. It is my sincere hope that this bi-weekly e-newsletter will keep you informed of the happenings in Lansing while staying true to the traditional style of *The Insider*. If you would like to contact me, please feel free to e-mail me at senmswitalski@senate.michigan.gov or call me at my Roseville or Lansing office. You can also meet me in person during my constituent hours, coming to a library near you. Call my office and make an appointment or just walk in. See schedule for details.

Mickey's Blog: Spreading the Holiday Cheer, Legislative Style

Has the snow and bitter cold got you down in the pits? Is dodging salt trucks and snow banks keeping you from enjoying your morning commute? Is shopping for your loved ones adding undue stress and agitation?

Take stock that, well, you are not the only one. There are millions facing a similar fate, including myself. The Holidays are upon us and help is on the way. I would like to spread some holiday cheer with you, Mickey Switalski-style.

Legislators often make statements before the legislative body but during the last days of session before the Christmas break, there is a mad scramble to get things done before everyone leaves to go out of town. It is common for the Legislature to pull some long days and sometimes even late nights in an effort to pass numerous pieces of legislation.

Debate is intense, courtesy goes out the window, and everyone is restless and wants to go home. So over the years, I have made some speeches on the floor, in an attempt to instill some bipartisan Holiday spirit among my slightly perturbed legislative colleagues. Here is a sampling:

From December 18, 2003, my statement as quoted in the Senate Journal is as follows:

“After some prodding by some colleagues and friends, I am going to repeat some remarks I made some years ago in another chamber, recalling some ghosts of Christmas past. So please indulge me by closing your eyes, and listen as I relate the astounding events of the last day of session long, long ago.

T'was the night before recess
In the Michigan House.
All the members were restless
When Rep. Hale spied a mouse.

A wee sleekit, and cow' rin',
And tim' rous beastie
Put a panic into
Irma Clark's comely breastie.

He scampered across
The desks into a crack.
Derrick Hale scampered faster
To the arms of Kilpa'ck.

Rocky pounded the rostrum
To call us to order.
Still some bills to be passed
And our time had grown shorter.

Just 10 minutes left
To the end of the session.
Plus the Speaker's remarks
An important digression.

Two bills hung in the balance
My favorites, too.
One was for me
And the other one, you.

That's the way it is done
If you want some success.
Especially when
Your side numbers the less.

Just 10 minutes left.
Would Chuck be verbose?
If we go beyond midnight,
My bill's comatose.

The adoption tax credit
Would die at midnight.
The end of the session
Kills all bills with spite.

But then time stood still
By divine intervention.
Or maybe a button
Under Randall's attention.

The Speaker was eloquent.
The clock made no move.
It's still 'leven fifty
With 12 bills to approve.

My bill came to the floor
And was passed in a rout.
Who says that two Freshmen
Don't have any clout?

The session then ended
Two minutes to spare.
How be it 1:30
When I walked out of there?

I preferred the strange mystery
When the truth reached my ears.
Next day's clock inspection
Found a mouse in the gears.

Merry Christmas to all."

On December 4, 2004, I gave the following: (*editor's note: the song was intended to be sung to the tune of "I saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus" but the good Senator failed miserably in singing the desired notes*)

"I rise to offer you all a song in the spirit of Christmas. Besides, its cheaper than sending out cards. I ask your forgiveness in advance, with further apologies to the late great Senate crooner, George Hart.

I saw Kenny kissing Jenny G
Underneath the Cap'tol Dome last night.
Bob didn't see us sneak
Out the Caucus room to peek.
Thought Shirley'd locked us in Approps to cut the budgets deep.
Some Dems were hopeful Jenny'd right all wrongs.
Six years in minority gets old.

Ken's colleagues on the right
Wanted him to pick a fight.
But fightin's only fun when there's some kissin' in the end.
Elephants and Donkeys often clash.
It is just the nature of the beasts.

House members on the floor
Can't conceive that less is more.
The Senate session's done before the House comes on the floor.

Now we've been broke a good 4 years or so.
Can't hit people with a tax hike now.
So smokers took some shots,
And the gamblers on the slots,

But *Early County Mill Collection* ain't a tax increase.

So when you go home to your family now
Thank our leaders for the job they've done.
Oh, what a laugh it would have been
Had Perricone only seen
Kenny kissing Jenny G last night.”

(Editor’s note: Needless to say, all audio copies of this presentation were destroyed with “extreme prejudice”)

This year, I gave it another whirl on the Senate floor. My statement from December 13, 2005 is as follows:

“I just wanted to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. Many of you have begged me, implored me, not to sing. I respect that and I will honor your wishes. But I thought I would share a wee limerick with you:

A fine looking Gov'nor named Jenny
Had me over her house times a-plenty.
She gave me a kiss
'Twas the ultimate bliss.
If my wife learns, I'll never get any (*Editor’s note-kisses that is*)

I give you now Cameron Brown
Looks a debonair man-about-town.
He's ever fine spoken,
Enjoys Funk Brothers smokin'
And he seeks the Republican crown.

Warren's telecom expert is Dennis,
Although Patterson thought him a menace.
He was briefly befuddled
And his driving was scuttled
By an ill-advised trip to the dentist.

Now with Martha you have my assurance
That a statement you'll hear on insurance.
Might there be a rate cut?
No consensus now, but
The election may bring us concurrence.

The Approps chair is known as Good Shirley,
Though her rulings can sometimes be squirrely.
When targets are set,
It's a pretty good bet
That she's got poor Prusi by the curlies.

Bob Emerson hails from Flint,
A city that's virtually skint.
He refused the campaign chair.
When pressed, he stamps and swears
And barks, "Grow up!" We won't take the hint.

Leader Sikkema hails from Grandville
So hard-headed they call him The Anvil.
But when he makes a deal,
He won't dither or squeal
Like that back-sliding House-leading man will.

But we can't be too hard on DeRoche,
For to do so would be very gauche.
It's a real bad idearia
I'll be sent to Siberia.
My new colleagues will call me Milosch.

I'll quit now 'cause I think I'm ahead.
If I don't stop, I may wind up dead.
It's been great being here
And we'll see you next year.

Merry Christmas and it's off to our bed."

Legislative Wrap-Up

The last days of session before the Christmas break featured numerous items that the Michigan Legislature addressed. Here is a wrap-up of some of the larger issues:

Business Tax Cuts: Governor Granholm signed into law a package of bills this week that aims to help Michigan's struggling manufacturing sector by providing tax cuts and incentives for job creation.

The bills (House Bills 4982, 5459-61, Senate Bills 203, 909-910) would provide a 100 percent personal property tax credit in 2007 and 2008 for equipment moved to Michigan, a 15 percent refundable personal property tax credit for 2006, and would adjust the sales apportionment factor to be less punitive on payroll and equipment. The package also provides tax cuts to Delphi and Visteon to encourage them to consolidate its operations in Michigan.

Last month, Governor Granholm also signed into law legislation that would sell some of the state's tobacco settlement money in order to create a fund that would be used to help start-up companies and diversify the state's economy.

Further discussion and deliberation on the state's business tax climate is expected to be taken up when the legislature reconvenes in January.

Wine shipments: A compromise agreement that would allow a limited amount of cases of wine to be shipped directly to Michigan's consumers was signed into law earlier this month. The agreement would require wine sellers to purchase an annual permit in order to directly ship in Michigan and to provide an annual report to the Liquor Control Commission. The compromise also requires that wine shippers ensure that the purchaser of the wine is at least 21 years of age.

The compromise comes after an earlier U.S. Supreme Court ruling that stated Michigan's law banning the direct shipment of wine from out-of-state wineries was unconstitutional because it did not treat them on par with in-state wineries.

Water Withdrawals: The Michigan Senate also passed several bills on December 8 that would regulate large water withdrawals. Senate Bills 850-52, 854 and 857 would establish uniform reporting requirements for all large capacity withdrawals by requiring permits for withdrawals over 2 million gallons per day. The bills also prohibit withdrawals that cause "adverse resource impacts" for water withdrawals of greater than 5 million gallons per day from the Great Lakes, and helps preserve Michigan's ability to object to water diversions outside of the Great Lakes Region.

The bills also creates an alternative dispute resolution process that encourages local water users to voluntarily adjust water use to avoid adverse resource impacts, and would allow the state to temporarily restrict the withdrawals of permit holders if there is a substantial and imminent threat of an adverse resource impact. The bills will now head to the Michigan House for further consideration.

Mickey's TV Insider Show

Check out my TV Insider Show coming to a television station near you. Watch me interview local guests about politics, life, issues and concerns to our district.

Sterling Heights

Every Saturday and Sunday at 12:30 p.m.
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

Utica

Every Wednesday at 9 a.m.
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

Clinton Township

Last week of every month- Sat thru Thurs
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

Roseville

Various Times
(Comcast Channel 18)

*Please note that Sterling Heights/Utica/Clinton Township will show the TV Insider Show on Comcast Channel 5 and Wide Open West Channel 10. Clinton Township will air the TV Insider Show at various times during the last week of every month. Roseville can see the TV Insider Show on Comcast Channel 18.

Coffee Hours

*Please note that since the District Office is in Roseville, I do not have set coffee hours in Roseville. However, I encourage you to visit the Roseville office. We even have a coffee pot. Everyone is welcome to attend the coffee hours and discuss their issues and concerns. **Due to the upcoming Holiday Season, future Coffee Hours will be announced in future editions of The Insider. Stay tuned for updates.**

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